



News Release

WISCONSIN ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA ADVISORY

Final flight of 300 soldiers from National Guard infantry battalion returning Saturday

Gov. Doyle, senior National Guard officials and families will welcome troops back to Wisconsin Saturday afternoon

Thursday evening flight on time for 9:00 p.m. arrival

The final group of 300 Wisconsin Army National Guard soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry is scheduled to return to Wisconsin early Saturday afternoon, Aug. 19. The Saturday flight is scheduled to arrive at Volk Field at approximately 1:00 p.m.

The battalion's other return flight, also with about 300 soldiers on board, is expected to arrive on time at around 9:00 p.m. tonight.

Soldiers on each flight will be greeted by Gov. Jim Doyle, senior Wisconsin National Guard officials and a military band — and also by up to 2,500 cheering family members who have been waiting for their return for more than a year.

The Thursday evening flight will return soldiers assigned to the battalion's Company A, Waupun and Ripon, and most of the soldiers assigned to Company B in Green Bay. The returning Company A soldiers had been previously assigned to Troop E, 105th Cavalry in Merrill and Antigo, and the Onalaska-based 32nd Engineer Company. Soldiers who had been assigned to Company A before the mobilization were moved into Fond du Lac's Company C, which will return Saturday. Company B soldiers returning Thursday include soldiers who had been assigned to the battalion's Company D in Marinette.

The soldiers returning on the Saturday afternoon flight will include the balance of Company B's soldiers, soldiers from the battalion's headquarters in Appleton and the soldiers from Company C in Fond du Lac, which was augmented by soldiers from the armories in Waupun and Ripon.

— more —

Final return flight details for 2-127th Infantry

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2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry left Wisconsin June 9, 2005 and deployed to Kuwait in August 2005 following several months training at Camp Shelby, Miss. The battalion was based in Kuwait, but the unit's convoy security mission took them throughout Iraq as they escorted military and civilian convoys in armed and armored Humvee "gun trucks."

Three of the battalion's soldiers were killed in action. Spc. Michael Wendling, 20, and Sgt. Andrew Wallace, 25, of Company C both died Sept. 26, 2005, after a roadside bomb exploded near their Humvee and they were attacked by small arms fire. Sgt. Ryan Jopek, 20, was killed just two weeks ago, on Aug. 2, 2006, while on his final convoy security mission. Jopek was transferred into Company A from his hometown unit, Merrill-based Troop E, 105th Cavalry.

Following an initial reunion with their families and a brief official "welcome home," the returning soldiers will travel to nearby Fort McCoy to begin several days of demobilization processing.

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Note to Editors and News Directors:

SATURDAY RETURN

News media are welcome to cover the return of 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry soldiers to Volk Field Saturday afternoon, Aug. 19. The flight is expected to arrive at the Air National Guard base sometime between noon and 1:00 p.m. Volk Field is located in Juneau County off Exit 55 on Interstate Highways 90-94 near Camp Douglas.

Following the aircraft's arrival, soldiers and their families will have about an hour together before the soldiers are bused to Fort McCoy to begin demobilization processing.

Although Volk Field will be open to the public for the base's Open House and Fly-In, we still require news media organizations wishing to cover the 2-127th Infantry redeployment to call Tim Donovan (608-242-3050 or Cell 608-516-1777) so arrangements can be made for access to the hangar and ramp area.

THURSDAY EVENING RETURN

News media organizations wishing to cover the 9:00 p.m. Thursday evening Volk Field arrival should call Tim Donovan (608-242-3050 or Cell 608-516-1777) so arrangements can be made for access to the military installation. **News media will not be permitted on the base unless arrangements have been made in advance.**

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